

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 437 587

CG 029 733

AUTHOR Roth, William M.
TITLE Videotherapy: Variations upon Therapeutic Themes.
PUB DATE 2000-00-00
NOTE 6p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Bibliotherapy; *Counseling Techniques; *Videotape Recordings
IDENTIFIERS Video Viewing

ABSTRACT

This paper suggests that videocassettes and videodiscs of commercial films provide a hitherto untapped resource for the application of principles and practices previously in the domain of bibliotherapy. Although students may balk at the idea of spending many hours reading through even the most engaging of popular fiction, the paper argues that they often display no such qualms about spending an hour and a half watching a film adaptation of the same story. The net result is that issues, ideas, and situations that would have formed the basis for bibliotherapy may now be processed within the context of videotherapy, with the therapist facilitating insight and therapeutic progress through discussion of popular films. Examples and techniques are provided and discussed. (MKA)

ABSTRACT

Videotherapy: Variations Upon Therapeutic Themes

(Presenter - William M. Roth, MA, NCSP
Delaware County Intermediate Unit)

Bibliotherapy has, for many years, been regarded to be a valuable therapeutic tool and has been practiced in numerous variations in many clinical and academic milieus. However, there has been much concern in recent years about the apparent decline in quantity and quality of time spent in reading, due to competition from an ever-broadening spectrum of indoor activities that vie for children's time (i.e., network and cable television, video games, videocassettes and the many wonders of the Internet.)

It is the thesis of this paper that videocassettes and videodiscs of commercial films provide a hitherto untapped resource for the application of principles and practices previously in the domain of bibliotherapy. Although students may balk at the idea of spending many hours reading through even the most engaging of popular fiction, this practitioner has discovered that they often display no such qualms about spending an hour and a half watching a film adaptation of the same story. The net result is that issues, ideas, and situations which would have formed the basis for bibliotherapy may now be processed within the context of "videotherapy," with the therapist facilitating insight and therapeutic progress through discussion of popular films. Examples and techniques for implementation will be provided and discussed.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

- ☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
- ☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

W. ROTH

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Videotherapy: Variations Upon Therapeutic Themes

William M. Roth, M.A., NCSP, Delaware County Intermediate Unit

A presentation made at the NASP 2000 Conference

Bibliotherapy (defined as “guided reading that helps individuals to gain understanding of the self and environment, learn from others, or find solutions to problems” [Shrank and Engels, 1981]) has for many years been considered to be a valuable therapeutic tool, and has been practiced in numerous variations in many clinical and academic milieus, including school psychology (Dreyer, 1995). However, in recent years researchers have noted an unfortunate decline in the quantity and quality of time spent in reading (Salomon, 1984; Reinking & Wu, 1990; Beentjes & van der Voort, 1991). During the past twenty years or so, especially, young people have been faced with an ever broadening spectrum of indoor activities that vie for their time. Besides the ever-present network and local television programming, there is now “competition” from cable television, video games, videocassettes, and the many wonders of the Internet.. As any high school English teacher knows, it now takes special effort to get students to consider reading to be a worthwhile leisuretime activity.

Anyone who works closely with children knows that they enjoy watching motion pictures, both in theaters and on video, and that they often enjoy talking about what they have seen. By helping them to select, and by speaking with them about, given popular films it is often possible to use these films as a springboard for discussion and

insight. Although a student may balk at the idea of spending many hours reading through even the most engaging of popular fiction, this practitioner has discovered that the same child may display no such qualms about spending an hour and a half watching a film adaptation of the same story. And the net result is that the same issues, ideas and situations which would have formed the basis for bibliotherapy may now be discussed and processed within the process of “videotherapy,” with the psychologist guiding the student through discussions of how protagonists thought and acted, and facilitating therapeutic insights and awarenesses.

Though such videotherapy can be introduced through the more formal process of assigning or loaning a child a given film (as is usually done in bibliotherapy), it is just as easy to engage the child in discussion of a film he or she has recently seen, if one is familiar with the film and can associate or interpolate issues which are pertinent.

An excellent example can be found in the recent remake of the classic Disney film, **The Parent Trap**. This updating of the popular 1961 Hayley Mills fantasy involves two twin sisters, separated at birth and raised by the individual parents with no knowledge of each other, who meet and plot to get their parents to remarry. Though a simple and engaging film on the surface, it can also be a source of discussion of such issues as parental divorce (or fears thereof), abandonment, separation, sisterhood, and (most pertinently for children of divorce) parental reconciliation fantasies. By discussing the feelings and actions of the children in the film, one provides a safe forum for talking about a child’s own issues and thoughts regarding these issues.

Videotherapy can be used in combination with other therapeutic and diagnostic techniques, as is bibliotherapy. It lends itself strongly to the use of metaphor.

For example, a twelve-year-old boy, newly arrived in the area and feeling abandoned because his elder brother (formerly his closest friend) had recently begun taking drugs and hanging out with a negative peer group, was loaned a copy of the 1984 movie **The Lost Boys**. In the film, a boy deals with the fact that his older brother had been bitten by a vampire and was being pulled into a vampire culture. By discussing how the young boy in the film felt, it was possible to deal with the student's feelings about his brother, drugs, loneliness, loss, and what friendship means and entails.

Among many other examples of films which can be used to establish therapeutic metaphors or encourage discussion through videotherapy are:

Bullying	-	My Bodyguard
Divorce/Father Issues	-	Mrs. Doubtfire
Loss/Guilt	-	Ordinary People
Letting Go	-	Born Free
Being Different	-	Planet of the Apes
Friendship/Loss	-	Charlotte's Web , etc., etc., etc.

Another therapeutic use of video technology is through the focusing and/or redirecting of a student's attention to specific ideas or statements made in a film. For example, one may call attention to such salient ideas as "The Force is with you," in the **Star Wars** films, or establish an anticipatory set for what the Wizard in **The Wizard of Oz** tells the Tin Man about how a heart is judged, for a child who needs to hear this message. ("The heart is not judged by how much you love, but by how much you are loved by others.") However used, videotherapy provides a medium through which well-

established principles and concepts can positively influence a generation that is focused on the screen.

References

Beentjes, J.W. & van der Voort, T.H. (1991). Children's written accounts of televised and written stories. *Educational Research and Development*, 39 (3): 15-26.

Reinking, D. & Wu, J.H. (1990). Reexamining the research on tv and reading. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 29 (2) 30-43.

Salomon, G. (1984). TV is easy and print is tough: The role of perceptions and attributions in the processing of material. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 76, 647-658.



U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)



REPRODUCTION RELEASE

(Specific Document)

I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION:

Title: <i>VIDEOTHERAPY: VARIATIONS ON THERAPEUTIC THEMES</i>	
Author(s): <i>WILLIAM M. ROTH</i>	
Corporate Source: <i>DELAWARE COUNTY INTERMEDIATE UNIT, MEDIA, PA</i>	Publication Date: <i>3/28/00</i>

II. REPRODUCTION RELEASE:

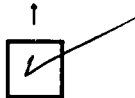
In order to disseminate as widely as possible timely and significant materials of interest to the educational community, documents announced in the monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, *Resources in Education* (RIE), are usually made available to users in microfiche, reproduced paper copy, and electronic media, and sold through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). Credit is given to the source of each document, and, if reproduction release is granted, one of the following notices is affixed to the document.

If permission is granted to reproduce and disseminate the identified document, please CHECK ONE of the following three options and sign at the bottom of the page.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 1 documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY <i>Sample</i> TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
1

Level 1



Check here for Level 1 release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche or other ERIC archival media (e.g., electronic) and paper copy.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2A documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE, AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY, HAS BEEN GRANTED BY <i>Sample</i> TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
2A

Level 2A



Check here for Level 2A release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche and in electronic media for ERIC archival collection subscribers only

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2B documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY <i>Sample</i> TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
2B

Level 2B



Check here for Level 2B release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche only

Documents will be processed as indicated provided reproduction quality permits.
If permission to reproduce is granted, but no box is checked, documents will be processed at Level 1.

I hereby grant to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) nonexclusive permission to reproduce and disseminate this document as indicated above. Reproduction from the ERIC microfiche or electronic media by persons other than ERIC employees and its system contractors requires permission from the copyright holder. Exception is made for non-profit reproduction by libraries and other service agencies to satisfy information needs of educators in response to discrete inquiries.

Sign
here,→
please

Signature: <i>[Signature]</i>	Printed Name/Position/Title: <i>WILLIAM M. ROTH, SUPERVISOR OF PUPIL SERVICES</i>
Organization/Address: <i>DELAWARE COUNTY I.U. 6TH + OLIVE STS. MEDIA, PA 19063</i>	Telephone: <i>(610) 269-0689</i> E-Mail Address: FAX: <i>(610) 565-1315</i> Date: <i>1/24/00</i>

III. DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY INFORMATION (FROM NON-ERIC SOURCE):

If permission to reproduce is not granted to ERIC, or, if you wish ERIC to cite the availability of the document from another source, please provide the following information regarding the availability of the document. (ERIC will not announce a document unless it is publicly available, and a dependable source can be specified. Contributors should also be aware that ERIC selection criteria are significantly more stringent for documents that cannot be made available through EDRS.)

Publisher/Distributor:
Address:
Price:

IV. REFERRAL OF ERIC TO COPYRIGHT/REPRODUCTION RIGHTS HOLDER:

If the right to grant this reproduction release is held by someone other than the addressee, please provide the appropriate name and address:

Name:
Address:

V. WHERE TO SEND THIS FORM:

<p>Send this form to the following ERIC Clearinghouse:</p> <p>University of North Carolina at Greensboro ERIC/CASS 201 Ferguson Building PO Box 26171 Greensboro, NC 27402-6171</p>

However, if solicited by the ERIC Facility, or if making an unsolicited contribution to ERIC, return this form (and the document being contributed) to:

ERIC Processing and Reference Facility
1100 West Street, 2nd Floor
Laurel, Maryland 20707-3598

Telephone: 301-497-4080

Toll Free: 800-799-3742

FAX: 301-953-0263

e-mail: ericfac@inet.ed.gov

WWW: <http://ericfac.piccard.csc.com>